

Dear Mr. Calabrese:

As a mother of a child with Autism I am very familiar with the ABA issues in this state. It is a huge challenge because the state does not certify enough ABA providers. There are just not enough to go around. At this point we might have one or two colleges or universities that provide training in ABA. We clearly need more.

ABA is a very specific discipline and should be provided by an ABA provider. At the very least it ABA should be provided with the oversight of an ABA expert.

The proposed amendments to the current law would enable anyone who is certified in any other special education area to oversee and implement a program as complex as this without proper training. School Psychologists, Speech Pathologists and Special Education teachers are not trained to provide ABA services. These professions ARE NOT INTERCHANGEABLE! Even more concerning is the vague language "including, but not limited to" leaving room for just about anyone to step into this crucial role. These services are critical to our children and to allow any other profession to administer a child's ABA program will be detrimental to the children and the desired goal of the program itself!

I urge you to not pass this bill as it would result in ineffective programming and a bigger mess than the state is already in with the ABA providers. Allowing other SPED specialist to provide ABA that are not trained would result in disaster for children with Autism. Do not pass this bill.

Thank You
Joanna Cooper